COLLEGE-BRED FARMERS.

Tell How They Made The Old Farm Pay---Many Good Points of Interest.

NOT AS DAD DID IT.

At the time I was graduated form the university I had no farming experience whatever, and when I took charge of the farm I now control—four hundred and sixty acres—it had been rented for several years, and was in a sad condition as to fertility and cultivation.

My first problem was to build up the productivity of the soil; this I considered fundamental; the next to decide upon the precise line of farming I should follow.

I decided to specialize; and without dairy cows, poultry, orchard or garden I planted alfalfa and clover to fertilize the land, bought cattle to eat the alfalfa, and hogs to scavenge the cattle.

I started with ten acres of alfalfa, which I cut with a mower, put in cocks, pitched by hand upon and off the wagon, and stacking two or three tons in half a day. Now I have nearly a hundred acres of alfalfa, which I cut with three mowers and put up with sweep and a stacker directly from the field, and handle sometimes twenty tons in half a day. The first year I fed one car of cattle and a few hogs. Now we handle three or four cars of each every year. I grow corn on the best land I have eventually I expect to grow corn on alfalfa sod. When this is done the farm will have come into its own, and then I shall be disappointed if my neighbors do not sit up and take notice.

But always bear in mind that farming is a long-winded game and that it moves excedingly slow for a city man, because from the conception to the consummation of each move is a season; a year must elapse, as a general rule.

Now, do you ask, what relation has all this to the training given by an agricultural college? Let me be frank with you; when I was graduated from the university in so far as farming was concerned my head was in a buzz confusion. Had I been a farmer before I attended school I no doubt would have seen things in a very different manner, and having a plan of action laid out or a certain farm in sight, would have had special precise knowledge on definite points. Once fairly started as a farmer however, I knew the proper balanced ration to feed cattle and hogs under given conditions; this one point saved me a great loss and delay. Then, again, I knew certain things about animal diseases and their remedies. This saved me not only from a large loss but also from falling into the hands of a great horde of quack veterinaries with quack remedies. When a farmer is losing his stock he is an easy victim for the quacks and their stock remedies. Also I knew something of insect pests that damage farm products, and the ways of overcoming them.

All this knowledge was of certain value to me, but the thing I learned, above all other things, which was at once the justification of my agricultural course and its best result, was an openness of mind with regard to farming. Farmers as a class are life members of the great fraternity of Do It as Dad Did It. They cling to the old way and old methods simply because they are ultra-conservative. They are prejudiced against things set forth in type or spoken from the platform. The neck of the agricultural graduate is free from the weight of these millstones of tradition, prejudice and conservatism which would hold him back from all progress. He is a student of his business; bulletins of experiment stations and reports of the experience of others—these are his textbooks. His work in school is but the beginning of his education.

H. W. DAVIS, Jr.

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COLLEGE TAME OATS.

On the home farm, before I went away to agricultural college, we practiced a four-year rotation of crops: twice corn, once oats, once wheat; and now I go this one better for I learned the value of legumes as soil enrichers. We sow clover with all our oats except a small piece each year, which we sow with alfalfa after grain is cut. The alfalfa we allow to stand three to four years and then follow it with corn years and then follow it with corn. We let just enough clover stand to meet our requirements for hay and seed, pasturing the remainder of the field and then plowing it under in the spring, to be followed with corn again.

Not many years ago we were told that we were wasting our time in growing wheat, that the corn crop was the real money crop.

Here is the answer to that statement which we have worked out in a practical manner: we were just the wheat crop ahead, as the increased yield in corn is caused by the rotation has fully made up for the loss in acreage. In fact, we are now able truthfully to say that we are the wheat, clover and alfalfa ahead—a clear gain—and this is no mean consideration when you figure the value of clover and alfalfa fed in connection with corn.

This one feature of what I learned at the agricurtural college is worth many times over what I expended for my education there. To understand the value of the alfalfa hay in all feed operations is worth a course in an agricultural school.

A few of our farmers tried growing alfalfa and pronounced it a failure. They urged against it that it would only produce two crops a year; that the first crop would come in the wet end of the season, which would render the hay impossible to stack without spoiling; that the second crop would not yield well in a dry season, and that it was after all, not a good feed.

While attending the college I had my eyes opened on the question of alfalfa, and on my return to the farm I said, "We will grow alfalfa." The result has succeeded beyond our expectations. We now keep twenty--five acres in alfalfa and get five tons of excellent hay from every acre every year, and an abundance of good safe pasturage besides. Not only is it relished by all stock but is by far the easiest feed to handle.

Before I went to college an ear of corn was an ear of corn and nothing more. If it had a reasonable size it looked good to me. I knew nothing and cared less about proportion of corn to the cob, about the value of a well filled butt and tip, and the various other vital features about an ear of corn. While at home on my first vacation from school I went to our corn-crib and tried to pick out a quantity of seed-corn; I was astonished to find that there was scarcely a presentable ear in the entire crib. Now I can go into any of the cribs on the farm and pick out 20 ears every one of which will score above seventy—and do this without any hunting over the pile, either. We used to think that our nine-hundred-bushel cribs did well if they shelled out nine-hundred bushels—and often they would fall below that mark. Now these same cribs invariably shell out more than a thousand bushels. Alll this change has been accomplished in five years simply and solely by the process of intelligent selection—for we grow the same variety of corn now as when we went to college.

Before I took my agricultural course the oats grown in our locality were practically confined to two varieties: one a fair yielder in a favorable year—but, unfortunately, most years were unfavorable, and these oats had a strong tendency to lodge and were very susceptible to rust; the other kind, a late variety, had heavy straw and would not lodge, but was a poor yielder. In school I learned of a new variety of oats imported from Russia by the experiment station. I brought several bushels of this kind home. This is the variety we now grow, and the yield is not only much larger but far more dependable, and these oats will stand up after our heaviest storms, even after they are dead ripe. This makes cutting a comparatively easy and successful operation. But the point which I wish to emphasize in this connection is that one neighbor after another has seen the success of our "college oats" and secured seeds, growing them as successfully as I have been able to myself. This little fact tells the story of the value to the country at large of the training given by the agricultural training given by the agricultural college. Whenever a good student of one of these colleges has located he has become, by sheer force of example, an active missionary in the cause of progressive agriculture. This kind of yeast is working in almost every locality.

Of course, it is idle to expect to revolutionize the old-fashioned home practices of rule-of-thumb farming in five or ten years, but I know from actual experience how to get a stimulus to the application of physical and mental energy along industrial lines it is to know indefinitely the ends you are striving for. In fact it is difficult within reason to put a limit upon the value to the farmer of knowing the peculiar qualities and points of breed of live stock and particularly of pure-bred sires; to know the hardy varieties of fruit, their adaption to different localities and to make cuttings and grafts. I don't believe the average farmer could tell you which is the best, piece root or whole root graft in apple trees for example.

Again you can hardly exaggregate the importance to the farmer of the knowledge of the value of humus in soil and the best methods of preventing soil erosion. Why, I remember when we used to sell our grain, burn our straw and corn stalks and dust and manure in ditches on the roadside in order to prevent washing. Now, by reason of the enlightenment I received from my scientific training, all this waste is stopped; we feed all our grain and get all the manure we can, The very first piece of farm machinery we bought on my return was a manure spreader, and the first year we used it to cover ten acres with six loads of manure to the acre. The ten-acre tract yielded six bushels more to the acre than the remainder of our cornfield, and in husking we could instantly tell where the unfertilized rows left off and the fertilized began.

H. W. EHLERS.

)To be Continued.)

DR. TOM BURTON

Writes An Interesting Letter from His Kansas Home.

Hoisington, Kan. Sept. 27, 1908.

After an almost unpardonable delay, I will send you a gentle reminder that all the Kentucky people in the "Prairie State" are still on their pegs and enjoying a fine rain that came last night and thoroughly saturated the surface of Kansas.

From all reports the drought is assuming alarming proportions in the East, but fortunately we have not suffered a great deal from it. True it has impeded the progress of the farmer in seeding, and has cut short the pastures, yet nothing has suffered further than that on account of of the drouth.

The climatic conditions this year is sufficient to convince the most skeptical, that other states and countries can suffer for lack of moisture as well as Kansas, and still there are numberless people in Kentucky, who actually believe that Kansas is a large flat rock, where winds make up the prevailing seasons and nothing is produced save "sunflowers and grasshoppers." Could those skeptics take a view of this broad expanse of fertile prairie land, and note the magnificent wheat and corn crops of the present year, also the fine hay, alfalfa, caffir corn, milo, maze and many other products of the soil too numereus to mention, saying nothing of our fine stock and stock raising; our wild game, our poultry, and our facilities and advantages for producing the same, would be convinced that Kansas is not so bad after all.

We produce more wheat, more poultry and more salt than any state in the union.

Our home county, Barton, produces more wheat than any county in the world. We have near four and one-half millions of bushels this year, in Barton county. Remo county leads all other counties in the world in the production of salt. The eastern part of the state is adapted to fruit growing, and there is an abundance of coal, gas and oil in the southeast part. With all this, and thousands of other advantages and facilities, there are hundreds and hundreds of people back on these little hill-side farms in Kentucky, who work day in and out, and all the year, and still they can only produce enough to live on, while in this country a large per cent. of the farmers have good substantial bank accounts and plenty of stock, land, machinery and everything necessary with which to produce his crops and pursue his daily avocation.

I have time and again wondered why these people do not seek a better situation, an easier and more independent living. Conceding that we may have a crop failure here, which is liable to happen in any country, still if we can produce a crop every third or fourth year, we will make more money than you do in some part of Kentucky if you have a crop every year. (now laugh.)

Why don't many stalwart young men take Horace Greeley's advice, and "go west." There are golden opportunities awaiting them. There is plenty of room—thousands of acres of the finest and richest soil on the earth waiting for the "husbandman."

Some will say, I have no money wit which to buy this land, but that is no excuse. They can rent or lease the finest of farm lands.

I have 320 acres of fine land that I will lease to a good man for five year and he can make enough money to buy a good farm, and money besides. Millard Rose has a nice farm 1 mile from mine, and I think he will be on it soon. He also has a nice home here in Hoisington.

It is not unusual for dozens of farmers to come into town on Saturday's driving a fine auto-car. I see in the eastern papers, panic, but we have no panic here. Millard Rose is night secretary at the Y. M. C. A. at a good salary, and he seems adapted to the work. We have several Kentuckians here in the city.

We have one of the nicest schools buildings in the west—just finished and furnished to a queens taste.

We have four nice churches in the city that are a credit to it. Our Y. M. C. A. is a fine building and the greatest institution of its kind in the city. Our library is the best in the country, and our public institutions will do justice to any city. We have two banks that do an enormous business, and one of our special needs at present is a first-class photographer. That would about satisfy our wants. We have one but he can't do the work. He has only one arm. You will hear of me again soon.

DR. BURTON.

A Farm anted.

I have an inquiry for a good farm having a comfortable residence and good orchard on it. Would prefer quality rather than quantity. Those having farms for sale will do well to write me at once, giving full description, price, number of acres level, kind of house, and all particulars that would interest a buyer. Prefer a place within easy reach of Louisa.

M. F. CONLEY.

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For the first time in its history, The Courier-Journal has made a special cut rate on its daily for the campaign. The regular price of the paper is $6 a year or $3 for six months. For the campaign a rate of $1.25 has been made, to apply to orders received during the months of June, July and August. After August 31 the regular rates will be in effect. Subscriptions received during these months at this rate entered on the Courier Journal mailing list until December 1 next, when all will expire.

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